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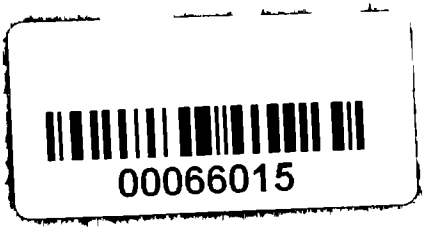

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KOREANS AT HOME

KOREAN GIRL IN WINTER DRESS.

Frontispiece.

KOREANS AT HOME

THE IMPRESSIONS OF A SCOTSWOMAN

BY

CONSTANCE J. D. TAYLER

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WITH FIVE PLATES IN COLOUR AND
TWENTY-FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
BY THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE.

THIS little book is an attempt to set down a few facts connected with the little-known land of Korea, as well as impressions gathered during several visits to that country.

I have not considered it within the province of such a work to give any account of the Chino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, in which Korea was the bone of contention, or of the causes which led up to the war. For the same reason I have not touched at all upon the political situation of the moment.

In speaking of the Europeans and Americans in Seoul and other parts of Korea, I have employed the term "foreigner," this being the word by which residents in the Far East are wont to describe themselves.

I should like to take this opportunity of recording my grateful thanks to those residents in Korea to whose kindness were due my facilities of seeing and hearing much that is recorded in the following pages.

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KOREANS AT HOME.

CHAPTER I.

AT HOME IN KOREA.

(Written in Seoul.)

SHALL we "make believe," as the children say, that you are coming to visit me in my Korean home? You must turn out of the broad street, leading from the West Gate of Seoul, into a narrow lane, which ends with the usual Korean entrance-gate, a wooden structure, flanked on either side by small gate-houses. The heavy doors being closed, you must pause outside, and shout for the "Moon-jiggi" (gate-keeper).

It is possible you may have to call twice, or even three times, for the "Moonjiggi" is a leisurely creature, and if you have come while he is engaged in the business of eating he will very likely conclude his meal before attending to your summons. When he does put his head out of the little window, you must, in answer to his look of mild enquiry, pronounce these cabalistic words, "Pouen isso," literally "Lady is." We will imagine that he replies,

"Isso" (*is*), and not "Upso" (*is not*), and you thereupon hand him your card, upon receiving which he will fling open to you the portals of my domain, and will, with a certain show of activity, precede you up the garden-path.

One of my two "amahs" (maids) will certainly be about to receive the card, to take it up to me, and afterwards to usher you into my sitting-room. These "amahs," by name Kim and Pak, names answering in Korean popularity to our Brown and Smith, constitute, with a Chinese cook, my share of our establishment. Miss R., who shares with me the joys and sorrows of our Korean housekeeping, has an "amah" and a "boy" of her own.

Kim is a lady of unusually attractive appearance, whose only short-coming is a tendency to perpetual laughter. Far more character is to be found in Pak, a most worthy creature, and, to us, a constant source of diversion. Pak's ever-present desire—and, indeed, it is a thing upon which she insists—is to be recognised by each of our visitors. She will station herself on the verandah outside the drawing-room, and will patiently await the moment when she can catch the caller's eye, and exchange bows with him or her. This accomplished, she will contentedly return to her labours. With Pak work is a passion. Her position in the household is that of washer-woman and mender, and if, as occasionally happens, everything is clean and nothing is torn, she roams uneasily about the house in a way that

MY HOUSE IN SEOUL.

Face p. 10.

almost drives me frantic. Sometimes, in order to spare my nerves, I resort to the extreme measure of pulling the buttons off something, and offering it to her for repairs. At the sight of material for work about to be delivered to her, Pak rushes forward with a loud clap of her hands and a look of ecstatic gratitude. This is a long digression. But now that you so thoroughly understand the character and idiosyncracies of Pak, you will bow politely to her as she stands outside the window, a queer, "bundly" figure; and so send her away happy.

The first objects which you will probably remark in the room are the rafters, which resemble those in an old English farm kitchen. They are visible in all Korean houses, which are constructed in the following manner:— The first thing is to plant the corner-posts firmly in the ground. These are notched at the top, and into these notches four horizontal beams are inserted. This forms the framework of the house. The rafters, roof, and, lastly, the walls of stones, or of wattle, covered with plaster, are added, and the house is complete. The sliding doors and latticed windows and the partitions between the rooms are filled with the strong oiled paper of Korea, which is imported into China for a similar purpose.

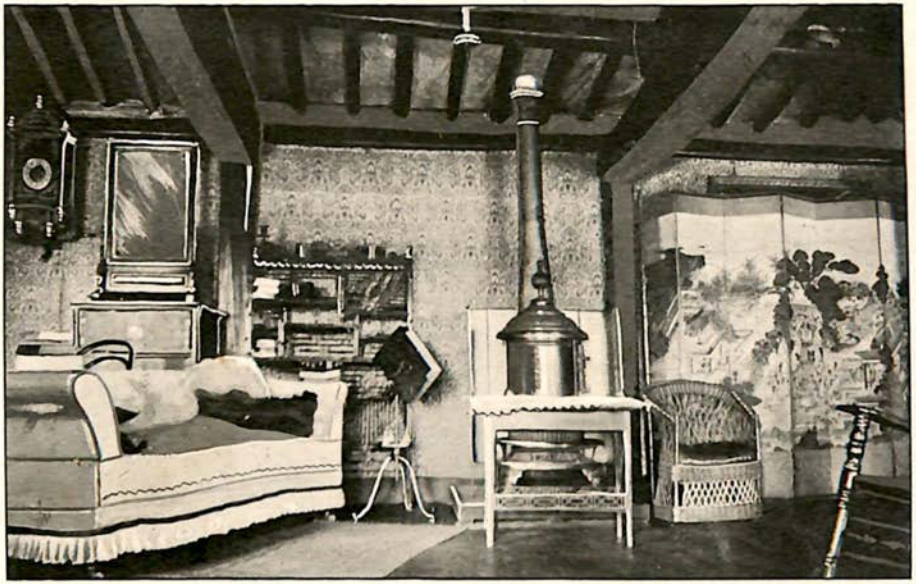
Every Korean house is built upon a hollow foundation, the "kang," through which run flues, formed by flat stones set upright in rows. Along these pass the heat and

smoke from the furnace on an outside wall of the house; the smoke finds its way to the outer air by a chimney set on the opposite wall. This is the method employed all over China and Korea for warming the houses. "Foreigners," not appreciating these "hot floors," use stoves instead. In our house the disused "kang" was the haunt of stray cats, which got in no one could tell how, and always seemed to find it extremely hard to get out again!

During your visit to me you are very nearly certain to see my Chinese cook, for it is his custom to wait until I have a visitor, and then to come and announce a scarcity in the most necessary articles of food. Introducing himself into the room with a sidelong motion, he stands smiling with mingled slyness and deprecation. "Bl-ed no," "Su'g'r no," he announces. By which I am to understand that the supplies of bread and of sugar have run out. If he can do this just before a meal his delight is unbounded, and he chuckles to himself as I send the garden coolie rushing off to Ai Tai, the Chinese storekeeper's.

When "Wong" first entered our service he evidently imagined it to be an ideal field for the exercise of "squeeze-pidgin." The first week's bill, when submitted to us with the various items written out in single column, reached the remarkable length of twenty-nine and a quarter inches. (I measured it.)

According to this document, we two, with one dog and



"FOREIGN." DRAWING-ROOM IN SEOUL.

Face p. 12.

three cats, had consumed in the course of seven days ninety-seven eggs, twenty-four pounds of beef, and other things in proportion. We afterwards conquered that cook, and reduced our daily expenditure to ($1) one dollar instead of five!

CHAPTER II.

A DESCRIPTION OF SEOUL.

IT was on a fine summer's evening that I took my first walk through the city of Seoul. The principal street, always thronged at this time of day, runs east and west, and the setting sun was casting his level rays on, perhaps, the most picturesque crowd the world can show. Figures in long floating robes of palest blue, green, mauve, yellow, or snowy white were moving hither and thither, their black hats giving value to the ever-changing scheme of colour. Now and then, with much shouting from obsequious attendants, some high official was carried through the crowd in his four-bearer-chair, the semi-transparent sides of which, allowing the occupant to be dimly seen, caused it to resemble a large meat safe! Other dignitaries passed along on pony or donkey back, each clad in the æsthetic blue, which is the official colour, and each one grasping

convulsively the handle fixed in the pommel of his saddle, while grooms on either side kept his feet in the stirrups, and a third led his diminutive steed.*

Closed chairs, evidently those of ladies of rank, passed by, often accompanied by a small girl attendant, running to keep up with the rapid pace of the bearers. These little maidens wore short yellow or green jackets and very full scarlet skirts, like inverted poppy blooms. Besides these, the gentler sex was represented by mysterious figures in long green cloaks, from the folds of which a pair of dark eyes would occasionally peer curiously at "the foreigners."

And here and there were to be seen strange forms, robed all in dust-colour, their huge domed hats concealing half the face, and the rest effectually hidden by the screens held up before them. These were the mourners, who are numerous in every Korean assembly, a man being obliged to mourn in this way for his parents for three years. Their dress, which seems specially designed for a disguise, was of the utmost service to the early Roman Catholic missionaries. According to custom, moreover, a mourner need not reply to any passer-by who addresses him.

But to me the most fascinating figures in all this strange and attractive company were the boyish ones of

* In Korea, helplessness is regarded as an attribute, even as a sign of noble birth.

KOREAN BRIDEGROOM. *Face p.* 15.

those whom I afterwards found to be the bridegrooms. There is no English word which seems quite to describe these little Benedicks; they are what the French call "mignon," the Americans "cunning!" The Korean boy, with his round, innocent face, his parted hair and girlish plait, is delightful. But no sooner does he attain to the dignity of a "married man" than he assumes the most charming airs of consequence. With his little chin in the air, with his yellow hat jauntily poised over his newly-acquired "top-knot," he struts along, swinging the skirts of his rose-tinted coat. His fan and cigarette now take the place of the toys in which he once delighted, and, disdaining the games of his former schoolfellows, he affects the society of those only who, in Korean phrase, have "taken the hat."

A fitting background for this motley crowd is supplied by the long rows of shops which form the "East Street" of Seoul. In these you may buy ready-made garments, mats, screens, fans, lanterns, pipes, and a hundred other things. Should you enter one of these shops, you will probably find the proprietor squatting on the ground in quiet enjoyment of his pipe. He will display no interest in your arrival, will offer you no assistance in the inspection of his goods; but, on the other hand, he will witness your departure, although you have bought nothing, without manifesting the least annoyance!

In the early morning East Street presents an animated scene. The roadway in front of the Great Bell, whose warning note at even erstwhile drove indoors all the male population of Seoul, is occupied by an excited crowd of buyers and sellers. They examine and run through their fingers the grain heaped up in mats or in large flat baskets, all shouting at the top of their voices, for in Korea no business can be got through without noise.

The fruit market, held a little further up the street, is a charming sight during the summer and early autumn. In July there are baskets full of coral-pink cherries, and later on appear piles of golden persimmons and of crimson peaches; while dainty pyramids are built of a small species of apple, which has a bloom as delicate as that of a grape.

Down the sides of the street stand, in rows, the pack-ponies, on which Seoul depends for her food supply. Wretched animals most of them are; ewehocked, knock-kneed, their poor backs galled by the clumsy pack-saddles, for the Koreans are as indifferent as most Orientals to the sufferings of animals.

A broad thoroughfare crossing East Street at right angles contains the Offices of War, Finance, Foreign Policy, and Education, and leads to the North Palace, the scene of the Queen's murder in 1895, and since deserted by the Court. Here there are several rather

WAR OFFICE, SEOUL.

Face p. 16.

LIBRARY
OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

fine buildings in Chinese style, such as the Halls of Audience and of Justice; also several elegant pavilions, one of which is built on piles over a lotus pond.

The apartments occupied by the late Queen form a sort of honeycomb of tiny rooms, each eight feet square, this being the Korean beau-ideal of size for a living room. The floors are covered with the finest imaginable straw mats; the paper walls are painted with delicate floral designs. In one room are represented groups of mythological animals, whose strange forms remind one irresistibly of "the Momerathe" and the "Jabberwock." The New Palace now inhabited by the Emperor was built after the Queen's murder, the site being specially chosen because it was in the neighbourhood of all the Foreign Legations, the proximity of which afforded much comfort to the perturbed mind of his Majesty. It is a curious comment on the uncertainty of all things in Korea that his Majesty should have since tried to buy up all the Legation buildings nearest to his Palace, with the view of adding them to it.

The third and oldest of the Palaces now standing is near the East Gate, and the buildings are scattered among groves of pine and chestnut trees. This Palace was deserted in the reign of the late King, who, looking one day from his window, saw a snake fall from a neighbouring roof. This circumstance was pronounced by those

learned in such matters to be an omen of import so dire as to unfit the Palace for a royal residence.

Of the Mulberry Palace, situated in the west of the City, only one Pavilion is now standing. Here the practice of archery, an ancient one in Korea, is sometimes indulged in.

Any description of Seoul would be incomplete without some mention of her soldiers, who number about 7,000, all quartered, as a rule, within the City. It is in the early mornings that they are most noticeable, for then it is their delight to parade the streets with fife and drum. Since 1896 they have worn Japanese uniforms, and have had the advantage of several "foreign instructors." Their prowess in the field has never yet been tried, but I must confess they never gave me the impression of being quite the "genuine article." In connection with this thought, for those who believe in the innate sagacity of animals, I record the following:— My Indian pony, which had been brought to China by a British officer, and which was, therefore, accustomed to the "best military circles," could never be persuaded to regard these Korean warriors with any measure of equanimity. Although at other times a well-mannered beast, a couple of them would cause him to shy badly, whilst his agitation on beholding a regiment was so great that I never knew what he might do!

THE PALACE GUARD.

Face p. 18.

Several incongruous and up-to-date features are found in the archaic City of Seoul. One is the telephone system, which connects the Palace with all the Public Offices and with the houses of the Emperor's spies! But perhaps the most striking anomalies are the lighting of the streets by electricity and the electric cars, which run inside and for some considerable distance outside the City walls. The cars are the property of an enterprising American company, which includes the Emperor among its largest shareholders. These cars were once the occasion of a riot, which occurred in 1899, soon after their inauguration. For several months no rain had fallen, and in July, at which time the heavy rains usually set in, the drought still continued, and the soil in the rice fields was dry and cracked. Then arose the wise men of the land, and declared that this affliction had come upon the people of the land because of the anger of the Great Dragon, who has his lair beneath the City of Seoul. How could he rest, they asked, when above his coiled form the restless "foreign carriages" passed so continually to and fro? The result of this was that on a certain day the people pulled up a part of the rails, and had to be forcibly restrained from attacking and wrecking the cars.

Besides the Palaces there are few objects of interest in Seoul. There is a Temple of Heaven, a feeble

imitation of the one in Peking, and a small marble pagoda of great beauty, supposed to have been brought over as part of the dowry of a Chinese princess.

Mr. McLeavy Brown, whose work and influence in Korea are so well known, had, when I was in Seoul, amongst other schemes for improving the City, a project for laying out a garden round this ancient monument, in which the Emperor's band, under a German conductor, was to daily discourse sweet music. To Mr. McLeavy Brown it is also due that the streets of Seoul are no longer obstructed by the temporary dwellings and booths, which in old days had to be removed each time the Emperor passed that way!

Another curiosity of the City is the Great Bell, mentioned above. At the casting of this, at some remote date, the metal absolutely refused to set, and at length a voice issued from the molten mass, demanding the sacrifice of an only son. A pious widow was found to devote her child, who was thrown into the cauldron; the desired result was obtained, and it is said that the voice of the boy can still be heard in the sweet tones of the bell!

The walls of Seoul are some fifteen miles in circumference, but the enclosed area consists partially of hill-slopes and unoccupied spaces. At the time of my visit the population was only about 200,000.

PAVILION IN THE NORTH PALACE.

Face p. 20.

CHAPTER III.

A MORNING WALK.

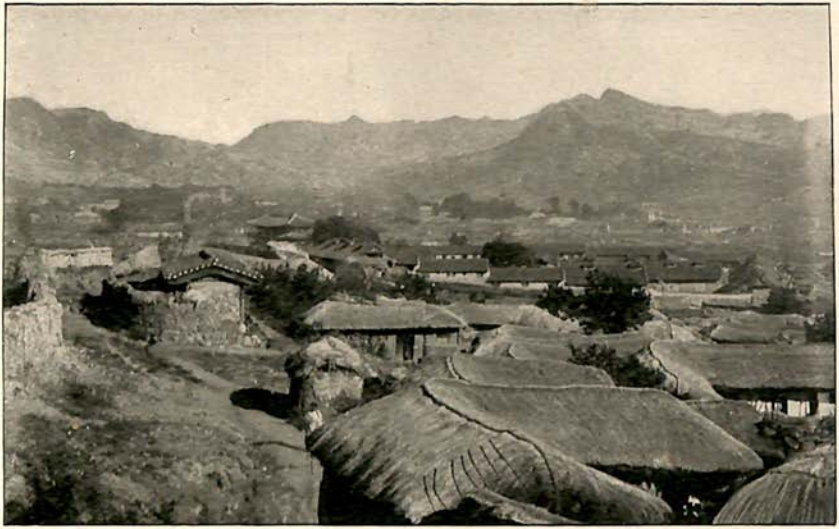
DURING the hot season, from the middle of June to the end of September, the only times at which exercise can be enjoyed are in the early mornings and after sunset. A favourite walk in the neighbourhood of Seoul is one which leads you by the "White Buddha," and brings you back by the "Peking Pass" and the Arch of Independence. Let us imagine that we are sallying forth at six a.m. on a peaceful summer's morn. And where indeed should the mornings be peaceful if not in the "Land of the Morning Calm?" The town seems, as yet, scarcely awake. In the streets are a few country folk, who have brought in provisions for the early market. At his newly-opened house-door, the Korean citizen is already squatting with his pipe, the sleep not yet banished from his heavy eyes, or the creases of the night from his dingy white suit. Thoughts of the "daily task" seem not yet to have penetrated his beclouded brain. A Chinese town, at this hour, would be a scene of humming activity. In an Indian city the devout Hindu would be already engaged in his devotions at the sacred

shrine, or on the river bank. The town-bred Korean seems to be really unique in his apathetic laziness!

Passing the entrance to the North Palace, and skirting the wall, we climb the steep way leading to the North Gate. This, although within the city walls, is a real mountain road. On the right hand rise the rocky sides of the hill called Nam Han, and on the left a grassy bank slopes down to a stream much frequented as an open-air laundry. Fragrant dew-laden roses twine across the path, the grass is studded with tiny lilac-tinted iris, and the Sophronaria, most graceful of shrubs, waves abroad its spikes of delicate butterfly-like flowers.

From the North Gate a rocky track leads down to a fertile valley, where the path follows the course of the stream. We pass the house of a sorceress, marked by the heap of stones raised by her half-adoring and half-fearful votaries, and a little further on is a large stone, in the sides of which are numerous small hollows. Only he who is conscious of no unfulfilled desire (and where is such an one to be found?) will hurry past this stone; for it is firmly believed that if a pebble can be persuaded to remain in one of these hollows, the wish of the person who placed it there will be granted!

We next pass one or two small farms, and the farmers, standing still to watch us go by, will probably



VIEW OF SEOUL FROM
THE WALL.

Face p. 22.

inquire, with aimless curiosity, "Lady, where are you going?" Emerging from the valley we come to the river of which our friend the stream is a tributary; and, crossing by a series of stones, and climbing the opposite bank, we stand before the "White Buddha." Cut in the lowest possible relief on the face of an isolated rock, the whole figure is of a dazzling whiteness. What devout sentiment inspired its creation, whose hand executed it, and for how many hundreds of years it has looked forth on the world with those dreamy sightless eyes, all these are questions to which no reply is forthcoming.

Continuing our way and following the track, which now leads us through rice-fields, we come to the old road by which the annual embassy travelled to Peking, and along whose dusty length each new delegate from the "Sun of Heaven" approached the Korean capital. This, with the exception of the road leading to Mapu—the river port of Seoul—is the most frequented highway leading to the city. Here you may see the goggled "yangban" in his travelling chair. The chair is carried in the manner prevailing in China. Two bearers walk close to the chair behind and before, holding the poles in their hands, while the other two support, on one shoulder, a short piece of wood, over which and under the shafts a strong linen band is passed. Thus on the foremost and hindmost bearers fall the greater part of

the weight, and it is constantly necessary for them to shift it from one shoulder to the other.

Here you meet also rude carts filled with wood or with slabs of building stone, drawn by huge bullocks moving at the rate of two miles an hour. Also bands of licensed pedlars, some of whom carry on their backs wooden frames covered with netting and containing fowls of ruffled yet resigned aspect. These pedlars all form a well organised guild, and they are so powerful and independent that they declare the Government dare not interfere with them.

Passing through a narrow rocky gorge, known as the Peking Pass, the road brings us to the hideous Arch of Independence, erected for the Koreans by the Japanese, after the late war. At the same time they pulled down the old arch, under which the rulers of Korea formerly met the Chinese envoys, thus obliterating one of the chief evidences of China's ancient suzerainty. Our road now leads us through a populous suburb of Seoul to the little West Gate, from which we make our way homewards, passing by the Russian, French, and German Legations, and by the Great Gate of the New Palace.

THE WEST GATE, SEOUL.

Face p. 24.

CHAPTER IV.

FOREIGN INTERCOURSE WITH KOREA.

THE first foreigners known to have entered Korea were the survivors of the Dutch ship *Hollandra*, wrecked on the western coast in 1627. One of these, Jan Wetteree, resided for many years in Seoul, and it appears that he there occupied much the same confidential position as did the Englishman, Will Adams, at the court of Japan. In 1653, the *Sparwehr*, another Dutch vessel, was cast on the rocky shores of Quelpart Island. Thirty of her crew who succeeded in reaching the mainland, became domesticated among the Koreans, and several of them were made officers of the King's bodyguard. Hamel, who, fourteen years later, escaped to his own country, wrote an account of their strange experiences.

Then for two hundred years, the only Europeans who entered Korea were the French missionaries, and of the devices they were forced to adopt in order to gain access to the country, some account is given in another chapter.

The rigid measures enforced by the Government from

about the middle of the seventeenth century, for the exclusion of foreigners, caused Korea to be known as "the Hermit Kingdom." The Tai-ouen-koun, father of the present Emperor, was a staunch supporter of this policy. The year 1860, six years before his appointment to the Regency, had witnessed the arrival of the Allies in China and the burning of the summer palace at Peking. This had been followed by the establishment of embassies in the Chinese capital and by the opening of several new Chinese ports to foreign commerce. Obviously, what had happened to China might well occur in Korea also, and it was the fear of this which prompted the relentless persecution, by the Tai-ouen-koun, of the French priests, as representative of the dreaded foreigner. After the massacre of 1866, news of the murder of French subjects having been carried to Shanghai, a small squadron was despatched to Korea under Admiral Roze. It anchored at the mouth of the river Han, and two gunboats were sent up to Seoul to take soundings. The manner of the enemy's arrival, vessels moving by steam having never before been seen in Korea, struck peculiar terror into the heart of the Regent. Yet hé refused to offer any sufficient apology, or any explanation of his conduct, and on October 13th the Admiral landed a body of marines on the island of Kang-hoa, half-way between Chemulpo and Seoul, with

the object of reducing a monastery which had been fortified by the Koreans. Marching carelessly through a narrow pass leading to this fortress, the Frenchmen were suddenly assailed from above by showers of stones and arrows, and were forced to beat a hasty retreat. On the day following this reverse, the French fleet returned to Shanghai!

This abandonment of the situation by the French, of course left the Koreans even more fatuously self-satisfied than before, and more convinced of their own superiority to all Western nations!

In 1870 an attempt was made by the United States to open commercial relations with Korea, and a small squadron was dispatched under Admiral Rodgers, who was charged with this mission. As the ships were passing Kang-hoa they were fired upon; the Americans immediately landed upon the island and destroyed all the forts, after which they returned to Shanghai.

There was an earlier abortive American expedition, sent to avenge the destruction of a private American trading vessel. On this occasion, the Koreans displayed unexpected bravery, as described in another chapter.

Korea's first commercial treaty was signed with Japan in 1878; shortly after a similar treaty was concluded with America, and later with England, France and Germany, and the treaty ports are now numerous.

CHAPTER V.

HISTORY—THE OLD KINGDOM OF KOREA.

KOREAN historians claim for their country an authentic record of at least three thousand years. According to them, Ki Tszè, the founder of Korean civilisation and social order, came over from China in B.C. 1122, bringing with him a band of several thousand Chinese. He it was who bestowed the old name of "Chosén," or "Morning Calm," upon the land of which he became ruler, and which lay between the Liao and the Tatong rivers, so that the only part of modern Korea contained within its borders was the present province of Ping-Yang. This old kingdom of Chosén existed for nine centuries, and from time to time fresh bands of emigrants from China came to settle there, until at length the original inhabitants, whom Ki Tsze had found living like wild animals in holes and caves of the earth, became absorbed into the superior race, while the arts and learning, as they existed at that time, were introduced into and flourished in the smaller kingdom. In B.C. 107 the Chinese Emperor cast covetous eyes on the fertile land of Chosén, and, having conquered it

STREET SCENE IN ARCHAIC SEOUL.

Face p. 28.

after a severe struggle, he made it a part of his domain. So much for the early history of the Koreans as related by themselves.

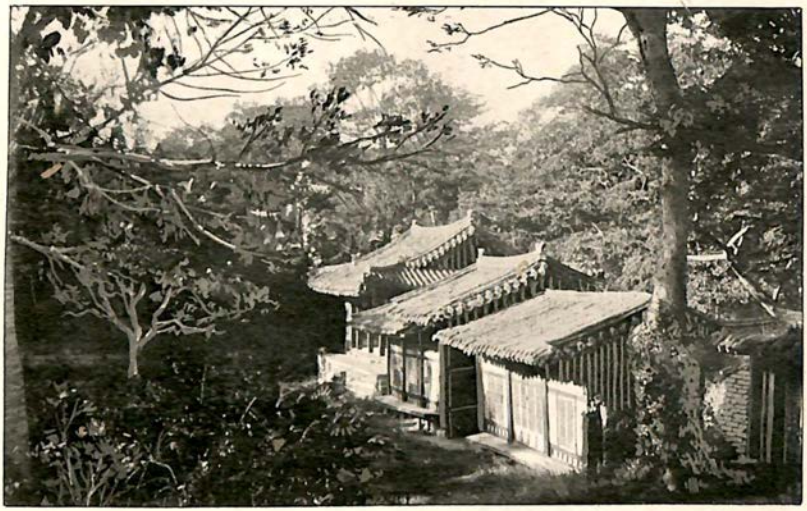
Founding of the Kingdom of Korea.—At the dawn of the Christian era, the tribes in the country surrounding China were still in the patriarchal and nomadic condition; the only exceptions were the people of the petty states of Fuzu and Korai. Their ruler, whose dominions included all that had once been Chosén, was recognised by China as an independent vassal prince, and his people are described by an ancient Chinese writer as being well skilled in agriculture, in horsemanship, and in the use of the sword. During the troublous times which followed the fall of the Han dynasty in China, the king of Korai succeeded in freeing himself from all allegiance to the Dragon Empire. He and his successors gradually extended their dominions south of the Tatong river, and Ping-Yang became the capital of Korai. During the sixth century she sustained three mighty invasions on the part of China; then for a time there was peace. But in 664 a great army swept down upon Ping-Yang, which was taken; the country was laid waste, and became again subject to China.

According to Japanese legend, the first invasion of the peninsula by Japan took place in the third century B.C., and was conducted in person by the half mythical

empress Jingo. The Japanese claim upon Korea is partly founded on her supposed conquest of the southern portion.

United Korea. In 912 Kung-wo, a Buddhist monk of Korai, raised the standard of rebellion against China. He was proclaimed king, but was murdered by his lieutenant, a scion of the old ruling house of Korai, who, conquering the whole of the peninsula, became the first King of Korea. The supremacy of China was acknowledged in the reign of his son Wu. The latter days of the dynasty of Wang were marked by great oppression and misrule. At length a deliverer of the people arose in the person of Ni-Taijo. This man, although of lowly birth, was, on account of his good qualities and his ability, raised to the throne by the people of Korea, whose choice he fully justified in the course of a long reign. By him, Confucianism was established as the State religion, and examinations in the Chinese classics were instituted, while the dress and the customs of China were formally adopted.

He made Hang Yang, the modern Seoul, his capital. In the year 1592, during the reign of Hideyoshi in Japan, the Japanese made a determined effort to obtain possession of Korea. In the month of May a large army under the Generals Konishi and Kato landed at Fusan and immediately started for Seoul, their route being marked by ruined and deserted villages. They reached the capital



HOUSES OF SERVANTS IN THE PALACE GROUNDS.

Face p. 59.

only to find it entirely deserted, the King and his court, with the greater part of his army, having fled to Ping-Yang. The Japanese followed, met and defeated the Korean army, and the city of Ping-Yang fell an easy prey to the invaders, some of whom were armed with match-locks, till then unknown in Korea.

At the approach of the rigorous winter of Northern China, the Japanese decided to remain at Ping-Yang until the spring, and orders were despatched to the fleet at Fusan to move round to the mouth of the Tatong river. The invaders here received an unexpected check by the almost total destruction of their fleet by the Koreans.

Their source of supplies thus cut off, they were rendered still more uneasy by news of the approach of a Chinese army sent to assist the Koreans. This appeared at Ping-Yang on New Year's Day, 1593, and the Japanese retreated to Seoul and fortified themselves there. Famine, however, had laid hold upon the land of Korea; there was much suffering in both armies, and all longed for peace. A treaty was therefore drawn up, according to the terms of which the invaders evacuated Seoul and retired to the southern coast, where they established several fortified camps.

A second Japanese invasion occurred in 1597, and was again met by a Chinese army. The first fortress

taken by the Japanese was that of Nan-on. According to the barbarous customs of the age, the ears of all the slain defenders were cut off and sent to Kioto, where the "Ear Mound" is still shown. For the second time the invasion failed through the destruction of the Japanese navy, this time by the united efforts of the Koreans and their Chinese allies. On September 19, 1598, Hideyoshi died, his last words being, "Recall all my troops from Chosén."

Until 1876 the Japanese retained possession of Fusan, and here trade was carried on between the two nations. The Koreans exchanged earthen pots, dried fish, ginsing, walnuts, and fruits for Japanese swords and military equipments. A yearly embassy went from Korea, bearing presents to the Tycoon at Tokyo.

In 1637 the Manchus, then engaged in the conquest of China, invaded Korea; they captured the person of the king, who, renouncing his allegiance to the Ming Emperor, bound himself to assist his captors in the reduction of Peking. On account of this early submission to the Manchu power, the Koreans were permitted to retain the old Chinese fashion of hair dressing and of costume which had prevailed among them for nearly three hundred years, while the Chinese, vanquished after a long struggle, were compelled to adopt the shaven head and the queue of their conquerors.

AN UNMARRIED KOREAN BOY. *Face p. 35.*

From that period yearly tribute was sent to Peking, and the Chinese minister in Seoul took precedence of those of all other nations. The throwing off of the Chinese yoke was only formally accomplished by the Korean monarch in very recent times, and was carried out at the instigation of Japan.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN KOREA.

THE first Christians known to have set foot in Korea came with the army of Hideyoshi in 1592. Konishi, one of the generals, was himself a Christian, and many of his soldiers had embraced the faith brought to Japan by St. François Xavier. Yet neither they nor the priests, who later on came over to minister to them in their camps near Fusan, appear to have made any converts among the people of Chosén. It was in this wise that the knowledge of Christ first came to the Koreans:—

In the year 1777 there was gathered together on the summit of a lonely mountain in the northern province a company of learned and thoughtful men. They were there to discover if possible the true meaning

of life and its highest duties. For this purpose they had collected around them the writings of the teachers and philosophers of China, and among them were several books treating of the doctrines of Christianity which had been brought from Peking by some member of the annual embassy. Throughout the long Korean winter these men remained in their lonely mountain pagoda, and when at length the sun and the warm winds of spring melted the snows, and it became possible for them to leave their self-chosen prison, they came forth sincerely convinced of the all-superior truth of the Christian religion. Their great desire now was for a priest. An urgent appeal was sent to the Jesuit Bishop at Peking, but owing to the difficulty of crossing the jealously guarded Korean frontier it was nearly twenty years before a Chinese priest succeeded in entering the country. However, Seng-houn, son of the Ambassador to China, having received baptism in Peking, was able to admit many of his countrymen into the Church. In spite of frequent persecutions, the Christians in Korea increased rapidly in numbers, and many of the rich and noble were received into their ranks. In 1800 two royal princesses, who had embraced "the Faith of the Master of Heaven" (as Christianity was called), were condemned to death, and in consideration of their rank were permitted to take poison privately. In 1827 the

Pope entrusted the care of the mission in Korea to the Société des Missions Etrangères.

Bruguière, a missionary of this society in Siam, hearing of the desolate condition of the Korean Christians, resolved to go to them. He left Siam in 1832 accompanied by one Chinese convert, and landed at Macao. The touching story of his three years' wanderings through China and Tartary, and his death from hardship and exposure when almost within sight of the Korean frontier, is told in Père Dallett's "Histoire de l'Eglise dans la Corée." He was followed by other priests, who succeeded in entering Korea, sometimes across the frontier from China, at other times approaching the coast in a fishing boat or trading junk, and, in spite of edicts and persecutions, the mission flourished. In 1866, under the regency of the Tai-ouen-koun, father of the present emperor, a great persecution arose, in which nine priests and many hundreds of converts perished.

Some twelve years later the present Roman Catholic Bishop of Seoul succeeded in entering Korea, and after remaining in hiding there for several years, and completely mastering the language, he returned to France and gathered together a band of devoted missionaries, some of whom are still working in Korea, and several of whom I was privileged to meet. The priests of the Roman Catholic Church in Korea now number between

forty and fifty, and according to their own records, their converts are about 40,000.

The first American Presbyterian mission was started some eighteen years ago, and its "Locations" are now to be found in all the open ports and in some of the large towns of the interior.

The mission of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, of which Bishop Corfe is the head, has stations in Seoul, Chemulpo, and Kanghoa, and some Anglican Sisters have opened a small orphanage in Seoul, where the "famine children," perennial in Korea, are taken in and succoured.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EMPEROR.

THE Emperor Li-Hsi is said by those who know him to be kindly and amiable, but these qualities, as far at least as their effect on his people is concerned, are nullified by his indolence and love of pleasure. Dallet says, writing in 1874, "Les Corèens commencent à dire, Le roi voit rien, sait rien, peut rien faire." He is greatly swayed by the needy flatterers and sycophants who throng the Court, and who encourage

ON THE VERANDAH OF THE BISHOP'S "PALACE," SEOUL

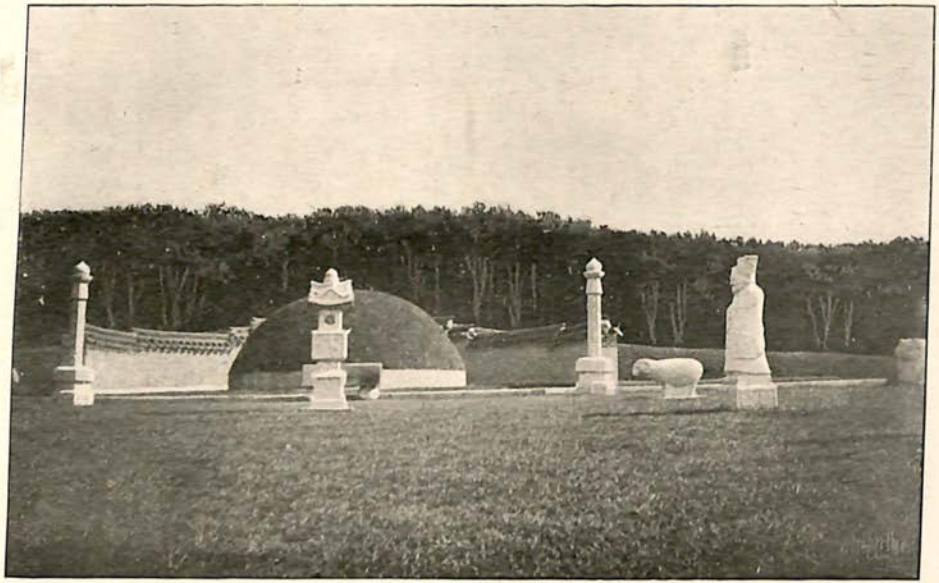
Face p. 36.

and minister to his every whim. When it is remembered that from his early childhood he has been surrounded by adulation and servility; that most probably no good or elevating influence has ever been brought to bear upon his character; that no thought of the responsibility of his position has ever been put before him, it can hardly be matter for surprise that he should have come to regard his kingdom as a huge orange to be squeezed to its last drop.

The person of the sovereign of Korea is sacred; his head is not represented on the coins of the country, for the reason that money, in passing from hand to hand, is likely to fall into the dust, and thus the effigy of his Majesty would be defiled.

The Emperor never leaves the precincts of his palace save when he goes forth in state for the purposes of worship or sacrifice. As a rule, he spends the first portion of the day in sleep, and the night in consulting with his ministers and advisers, or in watching the performances of the "Gesang," in which he delights. In 1866 Li-Hsi, then a child of six years old, was, in default of direct heirs to the throne, formally adopted by the then empress dowager. This august lady, on the death of the late king, at once took possession of the royal seals; she was therefore in a position to appoint herself regent of the kingdom, which she at once

proceeded to do, choosing as her coadjutor the father of Li-Hsi. This man, who was known as the Tai-ouen-koun, the title of his office, soon manifested an overweening ambition, restrained by no sense either of justice or mercy. To the Koreans he was known as "the man with the heart of stone and the bowels of iron." In due time the King Li-Hsi grew to man's estate and was married to a daughter of the powerful house of Min. She happened to be a woman of unusual intelligence and strength of will, and the Tai-ouen-koun, who realised that but for her his influence over his docile son would have been almost as great after the latter's majority as it had been before, hated her with a deadly hatred. After one or two fruitless attempts on her life, this amiable father-in-law at last devised a scheme which proved entirely successful. Early one morning in the autumn of 1895, a party of hired ruffians forced their way into the palace in Seoul; they made at once for the apartments of the ladies, where their appearance created the utmost dismay and confusion. The queen's person was not known to any of the intruders, and it is said that the action of an aged minister, who rushed in on hearing the cries of the ladies, and placed himself before her, led to her identification. In a few minutes all was apparently over, and the queen had fallen to the ground covered with



TOMB OF THE TAI-OUEN-KOUN

Face p. 38.

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ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

wounds. Yet her ruling passion, love for her sickly and half-witted son, the Crown Prince, was strong even in death. She exerted her failing strength, and raising her head a little from the ground, she inquired of one of her faithful attendants, "What of the Prince?" The movement was instantly perceived by the assassins, who, rushing forward, in a moment completed their deadly work. Thus perished in her thirtieth year, the last *queen* of Korea; a woman who might, under happier circumstances, have conferred real benefits on her oppressed people. Shortly after this event the Tai-ouen-koun himself died. For some time after the tragic death of his consort the king remained in a state of pitiable nervousness. Night after night he begged for and obtained the presence of some foreigner in the Palace, now become for him an abode of dread and terror. And one day he was smuggled into a chair belonging to a lady of the Court and secretly conveyed to the Russian Legation. Here he remained for three months, before the pressure brought to bear upon him by the representatives of the Powers could induce him to again trust his sacred person to the care of his own soldiers.

Shortly after this, acting on Russian advice, Li-Hsi declared himself the first Emperor of Korea.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN AUDIENCE WITH THE EMPEROR.

IN the autumn of 1901 I was the happy and suitably fluttered recipient of an invitation to an audience with the Emperor. Several other "foreign" ladies of Seoul had been similarly honoured, and we found ourselves at four o'clock in the afternoon of the appointed day assembled in a room of the Palace, which, from its style of furniture, one can only describe as an imitation of an English "parlour." Here we sat, in somewhat chilly expectation, for we had been told that evening dress was "de rigueur." To us came a Court dignitary, and, with the words "The Emperor is ready," he preceded us through a labyrinth of passages, across one or two courtyards, and at length into the Imperial presence itself. If we had expected to see his Majesty seated on his throne, and surrounded by all the pomp and glitter usually associated with the idea of an eastern court, we were doomed to disappointment. In one corner of the room was a small table, and behind this stood a figure in whom we recognised the Emperor, his dress being the ordinary one of a Korean gentleman.

THE EMPEROR OF KOREA.

(From a Photograph by Mr. Morris.)

Face p. 40.

The Crown Prince stood beside him, and between them the Emperor's youngest son, the five-year-old child of the Lady Om. I was at first filled with alarm on observing the manner in which the foremost lady made her obeisance to the Emperor; it looked as if it must be so very difficult to do! But having watched five others go through the performance with success, I was able to advance in my turn with comparative confidence. What was required was to grasp the Imperial hand, and then, holding one's elbow as high as possible, so that it should not come into too violent contact with the intervening table, to execute a Court courtesy. A similar honour had to be paid to the Heir-Apparent, and to the baby Prince, whose little hand just rested on the table-edge. Then, polite inquiries and compliments having been exchanged by means of the interpreters, who speak French and English, we were informed that the Emperor had provided an entertainment for us, to be followed by a dinner, and that he hoped, as the interpreter colloquially expressed it, that we would have "a jolly good time." In an adjoining pavilion we took our places for the show, which was to consist of an exhibition of dancing by the Imperial corps of "Gesang."

These little votaries of Terpsichore soon appeared, in long pink robes, with upper dresses of transparent blue and with flowers in their hair.

For the first dance they held long staves in their hands, and, to the strains of a band of stringed instruments, advanced and retreated, mingled and again separated, with rhythmic precision. Then a screen, perhaps 10 feet high, being brought in, the girls advanced two at a time, and, standing on either side and swaying in time to the music, each threw a small scarlet ball, with the object of making it pass through a circular hole near the top of the screen. Those who succeeded were rewarded with a flower stuck in their hair, while the unsuccessful, amid peals of laughter from their companions, were decorated on the right cheek with a black patch. After this the "chef d'œuvre" of Korean dancing was presented to us. This is called the Dance of the Golden Oriole, and is performed by one dancer, attired in shining yellow, with long flowing sleeves. It is really a series of charming poses, which are gone through while the dancer remains on one spot. With this the exhibition concluded, and we were then summoned to enjoy the repast prepared for us. The meal was an ordinary English one. Several of the Ministers and interpreters partook of it with us, and showed a marked appreciation of the foreign dishes. As we rose from table, one of the Ministers, wishing to present a memento to a lady, took from the table some of the artificial flowers used in the decorations, when a head came

suddenly round the screen at the lower end of the room, and a voice exclaimed with asperity, "Laissez-donc, s'il vous plait." The head and the voice belonged to a lady, once an inhabitant of the Russian Legation, whose function it now is to superintend the foreign entertainments given in the Palace. Before leaving we were each presented with a specimen of the really beautiful artificial flowers made by the Koreans.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PEOPLE.

THE people of Korea, although belonging to the Mongolian race, are quite distinct in appearance from either of their neighbours, the Chinese or the Japanese. The men are, as a rule, tall, and they carry themselves well. They have oval faces, an olive-tinted skin, which in young persons is often ruddy, and abundant dark hair. Some anthropologists have suspected an admixture of Aryan blood, and this idea is certainly supported by the curiously European look of some of the faces one sees, especially among the upper classes.

As to national characteristics, the Koreans are inclined

to be idle, improvident, and careless of the morrow.* Père Dallet, who spent many years among them, writes: "Les Coréens, naturellement flaneurs et bavards, sont continuellement par voies, et sur les chemins." But he also testifies to their kindheartedness and generosity to one another: "La grande vertu du Coréen est le respect de la fraternité humaine." In all great misfortunes, and on all the chief occasions of life, they place themselves unreservedly and as a matter of course at the service of their neighbours. A proof of their natural benevolence is afforded by the large number of beggars who manage to exist in the country.

When roused, their passions are very violent, and suicide in a fit of anger is a not uncommon occurrence. In the old days, hereditary feuds were numerous, and it was not unusual for a man to receive from his father a coat which he was not to take off until he should have avenged the family honour! Whatever the Koreans may have been in days of yore, they cannot now be termed a brave people, although they can fight with the most desperate valour when brought to bay, as they were by the Americans in 1871, in the forts of Kanghoa. On that occasion the hard-pressed defenders,

* It is not only with regard to the future that they are heedless; in the face of a well recognised danger they will neglect the most ordinary precautions. Thus, in those districts where tigers are numerous, the people constantly sleep with their house-doors open. A curious instance of this indifference to obvious peril is the case of the two Koreans who lately laid themselves down to sleep on the electric tramway line in Seoul, with their heads actually pillowed on the rails!

KOREAN MARRIED MAN.

Face p. 44.

deprived of their rude weapons, fought on with stones and handfuls of dust, and many of them stubbornly refused quarter.

The women, with the exception of some of the ladies of good family, and the "gesang," or dancing girls, who are chosen for their good looks, are distressingly plain. Hard work may account for much of this; for if the Korean man is idle, his wife is a true example of industry. She labours all the day in the house or in the fields, and often sits up half the night to wash and prepare the long white coat without which no self-respecting householder would be seen abroad. When his wife has a little leisure, she seeks the society of the other women, for in Korea there is absolutely no home life. Marriages are arranged by parents for their children, and it is only in rare cases that a bride and bridegroom behold each other's faces before the wedding ceremony is over. It is possible that the average of married happiness in Korea may be greater than we, with our very different ideas and customs, can imagine to be possible. Should a man feel any affection for his wife, it would not be etiquette for him to show it, while to manifest sorrow at her death would be to incur the ridicule of all his fellows. Marriage usually takes place from at twelve to fifteen years of age. By it a boy acquires at once all the dignity and importance of manhood. His hair is twisted into a top-knot indicative of his state, and he is for the first time in his life entitled to wear

a hat! His childish name is dropped and a new one given to him. Those unfortunate individuals who through poverty are unable to marry remain socially children all their lives. In the assemblies and councils of the men they can have no real part, but must perforce give way to the chubby boy-bridegroom of twelve years old. These despised bachelors have one small privilege, the possession of which must at times prove extremely convenient; in the eye of the law, as in that of their fellows, they are only children, and as such are always treated with extreme leniency. As to the women, they, poor things, count for very little at any time. They have not even names of their own! In the family circle a girl is known by some pet name, often that of a flower; but on her wedding day she loses even that, and is known henceforth as "the wife of So-and-so." A husband, in directing a remark to his wife, shows that he does so, by prefixing it by a word meaning literally "Come here!"

Although widows do occasionally re-marry, such conduct is not admired. A woman who, on her husband's death, makes away with herself, is venerated as a model of conjugal fidelity.

Korean women, although legally they have no existence, yet enjoy certain privileges; for instance, they are permitted to ride in their chairs past the Palace gates, while men are compelled to alight and to go on foot.

LITTLE GIRL IN SUMMER DRESS.

Face p. 46.

And, until some six years ago, a strange custom, now fallen entirely into disuse, gave over the streets of Seoul to the women from sunset until 1 a.m. As the sun sank, the Great Bell sounded, and every man hastened indoors, for to disregard this signal was to court the severest penalties. And then there stole forth from their seclusion ladies of high degree, upon whom since their childhood no man, save those of their own family, had ever looked. Attended by maids with lanterns, they passed through the streets on their way to visit their female friends and relatives, and one can imagine how they must have revelled in the liberty denied them during daylight!

Koreans adore their children, and the Chinese custom of getting rid of girl babies by exposure to the elements is unknown among them. Boys are, of course, the more greatly desired, and if a man has none of his own, he will adopt one, in order that "the rites" may be properly performed after his death.

The population of Korea increases but slowly, infant mortality being very great; small-pox is a terrible scourge, and is so much dreaded that a Korean father in enumerating his children will only count those who have passed safely through it.*

The number of the blind in Korea is remarkable, as

* Père Dallet states that there are probably not more than 100 persons in the whole of Korea who have not had this disease.

is also the confidence with which they move along the roads. I have more than once only become aware of the affliction of a passer-by through narrowly escaping violent contact with him, so little did his gait and bearing suggest that which we are accustomed to associate with a sightless person. Entirely confined to the blind is the calling of the "pansu," or soothsayer, whose business it is to cast horoscopes, and to determine fortunate times and places for the celebration of marriage and funeral ceremonies. The Koreans are by nature a noisy people, and to talk very loud in company is considered the height of good manners. Boys are made to learn their lessons by shouting them aloud, and it may be that the powerful vocal organs for which they are in after life so remarkable are in part due to this early habit.

As sportsmen the Koreans do not excel. The calling of the hunter is regarded as a low one, and is never followed except as a means of livelihood. The hunters usually stalk their quarry disguised in fur, feathers, or leaves, and they seek to attract the birds or animals they pursue by imitating their cries. Some of the tiger-hunters display considerable courage. One of them will go out alone, armed only with an old flint-lock; he will usually endeavour to get the tiger into a cave or tight corner of some sort before attacking him. Good tiger-skins are highly prized, and the teeth, claws, and blood of the

BOY IN WEDDING COSTUME. *Face p.* 48.

animal are regarded as valuable medicines; while men eat the heart in order that they may become brave.

Age is regarded by the Koreans as being in itself most honourable and worthy of reverence. It is polite to inquire the age of one's host or hostess, or of a guest; and if a "foreign" lady thus questioned were suspected of understating the number of her years, it would be put down to an excessive modesty on her part, and as showing that she did not wish to insist on receiving all the respect in reality due to her!

Those who attain to the Chinese cycle of sixty years are thought peculiarly worthy of honour, and a man so favoured by Heaven is no longer expected to take any active part in life, but is allowed by general consent to devote himself to reflection and retrospect.

Koreans have voracious appetites, and their powers of absorption are remarkable, as indeed they ought to be, for it is the great object of every mother to develop in her children a large capacity for food. The Japanese, themselves no mean trencher-men, acknowledge that in this respect one Korean equals two inhabitants of the Land of the Rising Sun! Nothing comes amiss to the Korean—meat, fish (raw or cooked), fowls, grain, vegetables, fruits, all are eagerly welcomed. Some of the Koreans are partial to the flesh of dogs, but this is not considered a very respectable taste! Tea is practically

unknown. Intoxicating liquors are brewed or distilled from rice and other grains. It is not considered at all disgraceful to drink to excess, and he who can afford, like Tam-o'-Shanter, to become "glorious," is regarded as a happy and much-to-be-envied person.

Meals are served on low tables, the family squatting on the floor; wooden spoons and chop-sticks are employed. An Englishman, well qualified to judge of the rival merits of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cookery, informed me that he unhesitatingly gave the palm to the last of the three. Games resembling chess and draughts are frequent amusements with the Koreans. The favourite entertainment for those who can afford it is the dancing of "gesang." The theatre proper does not exist, the only known form of drama being one in which all the characters of a piece are taken by a single actor. The concerted music of the Koreans, like most Oriental harmony, is discordant to our ears; but occasionally the notes of a flute, played on some lonely hillside, convey to one an air at once sweet and plaintive.

The official language of the country is Chinese, which is taught in all the Government schools, while the public examinations are conducted in that tongue. The Korean language possesses a syllabary consisting of eleven vowel sounds and fourteen consonants. This syllabary, from its resemblance to the Sanskrit alphabet, is supposed to

LADIES OF THE PALACE.

Face p. 51.

have been introduced into Korea by the Buddhist priests in the fourth century.

Unlike the Chinese, the Koreans have no natural antipathy to strangers; the exclusion of foreigners from the country was entirely due to the policy of the Government.

CHAPTER X.

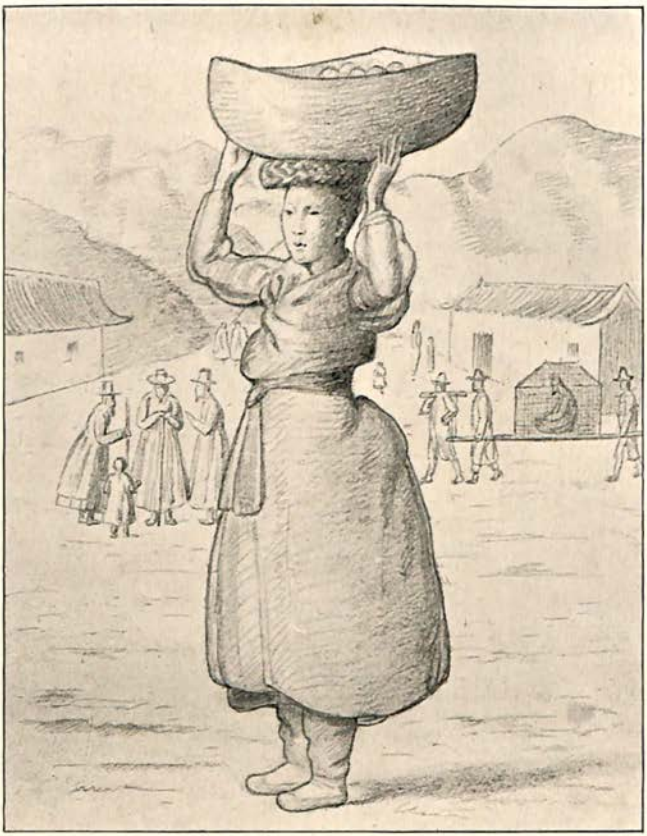
COSTUME.

ONE marked characteristic of Korean costume is its tendency to widen toward the base, so that a rough drawing of a Korean can be made by first sketching an isosceles triangle! From this it will be inferred that dress in Korea leaves something to be desired as regards form. Nevertheless the attire of a "yangban," or a Korean gentleman, is not wholly without charm. In summer, over the usual jacket and trousers of white cotton, from one to four robes of transparent silk gauze are worn. These are of the most delicate tints, and the effect of cerulean blue worn over pale green, or of primrose over coral pink, is decidedly pleasing. The little etceteras of the costume, the silken cord confining it at the waist, the amber button which fastens it, the hat string of amber and coral, the prettily

66015

embroidered Chinese shoes, all give it a certain dainty distinction of its own. The winter dress is similar in form, but dark colours such as myrtle green or purple are usual, and all coats and robes are wadded throughout. Like the Chinaman, the Korean is a believer in the wearing of a great number of garments. As the weather gets colder, he simply adds another and another coat to those he is already wearing, so that by mid-winter he has become a shapeless bundle of silk and cotton. Coats and hoods lined with the skins of the bear, sable, and ermine are worn by those who can afford them. The Court dress of officials is of æsthetic blue, and with it is worn a leathern belt richly jewelled. The gala dress of these dignitaries is shown in the portrait of Mr. Kim Kiu Hai.

Those belonging to the two lower classes of Society dress as a rule in white. The coolie contents himself with a short jacket and trousers, but for the farmer and trader, except when engaged in manual labour, the long white coat is absolutely *de rigueur*. These coats have to be taken to pieces in order to be washed, and some of the seams are stuck together again with paste, instead of being sewn. The wonderful sheen to be observed on them is produced by rolling the garment round a piece of wood and beating it with sticks. The tapping of these, all over the city of Seoul, is distinctly audible on



WOMAN EMPLOYED IN THE PALACE.

Face p. 53.

a still evening. Korean dresses not being provided with pockets, everyone carries small silken bags, hanging at the waist, and the men, in the intervals of smoking, thrust their pipes down their backs with the bowl protruding. Elderly men complete their costume by a pair of large round spectacles of pebble or smoked glass. Woollen garments are unknown in Korea; the few flocks of sheep to be seen in the neighbourhood of Seoul belong to the Emperor, and are only kept for sacrificial purposes.

The working woman's dress is neither a becoming nor a convenient one. The upper part consists of one or two short cotton or linen jackets; very wide pantaloons are worn, and over these, two or three skirts made in straight pieces to fold over and tie under the left arm. Only the very poorest women ever stir from home without first enveloping themselves in their long cloaks. In Seoul these are made of green silk, and they are really coats with sleeves, but are always worn over the head with the sleeves pendant. The Korean lady's dress only differs from that of her poorer sister in being fashioned of silk or silk gauze, and having the skirt so long that it rests on the ground in folds. Very little jewelry is worn; the chief ornaments consist of strings of coral and of the pearls for which Korea was once so famous.

Padded socks of white cotton are worn by both men

and women. The rich wear Chinese shoes, but the ordinary foot-gear is the shoe of twisted grass. A man who is starting on a long journey can be recognised by the number of these which he carries with him, as a walk of twenty miles or so is sufficient to wear one pair into holes.

Korea is *par excellence* the country of hats. There is the hat of the bridegroom, the married man, the mourner, the priest, the pedlar, the bullock-driver, the chair-man, and the messenger.

Of these the first six are made of plaited horse-hair, bamboo, or straw, the two latter of coarse felt. The ancient hats worn by the soldiers were also of the latter material. The hat of the wealthy married man is of fine black horse-hair. A good one may cost as much as twenty yen (Japanese), about £2 5s. According to Dallet, these hats were at one time of a circumference of sixty centimetres. The bridegroom's hat is of yellow straw; that of the mourner and pedlar of bleached grass. Besides these are the curious black cap with wings worn at the Court, and the student's cap, both made of horse-hair. A band of this material passing across the forehead and round the head is worn by all Koreans under their hats or caps. The hats of mourners, priests, and bullock-drivers are placed on a straw frame which fits round the temples.

MARRIED WOMAN.

OLD MILITARY HAT.

WOMAN IN WINTER CAP.

COURT HEADDRESS.

Face p. 54.

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BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

By a strange anomaly, Korea, situated as she is between China and Japan, is destitute of umbrellas. On a wet day all the male population who can afford it appear in coats and hats of oiled paper, and wearing wooden clogs which raise them well out of the mud. The women wear, on their heads, a frame-work of bamboo, covered with this same invaluable oiled paper!

CHAPTER XI.

DIVISIONS OF SOCIETY.

THERE are four distinct classes of society. They are as follows:—The Royal Family, the nobles, the farmers, the traders and artisans.

The present Royal Family is descended, although not directly, from Ni Taijo, who was raised to the throne of Korea in 1368. The Emperor is an absolute monarch, with power of life and death over his subjects. He is, however, greatly influenced in his actions by the nobles, many of whom, being descended from those who helped to place the present dynasty on the throne, consider themselves entitled to special consideration. Most of the high offices of the State are filled by members of the aristocracy. Although Korea has theoretically adopted

the Chinese system of giving preferment to the successful candidates in the Government examinations, yet in practice this system is greatly modified by two causes: the poverty of the nobility and the fact that the State service is regarded as the only possible opening for the scions of noble houses. The rapid changes which, at times, take place in the ministerial and official world of Korea are apt to remind the unprejudiced observer of the delightful inconsequences of a comic opera. For instance, a high dignitary will, for some real or imaginary offence, be condemned to pass the rest of his existence in some remote part of the country, and never again to behold the face of his Emperor. And it may be that three weeks later the same doors which were closed behind him, as he hurried forth from the Imperial presence, disgraced and degraded, will be opened to receive the whilom exile, now invested with yet greater honour and dignity than were his before! Perhaps a natural result of this uncertainty in the tenure of office is that every man's policy should be to make as much as he possibly can while he remains in power. A regrettable state of things thus arises. The high official "squeezes" those immediately below him; they, in turn, their subordinates and inferiors; and so on, down to the wretched coolie, who is mulcted in his scanty pay, and cannot be consoled, because there is no one lower than himself from

COOLIE WITH JIGGI FOR CARRYING LOADS.

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whom he too can wring a profit. Under this system there can be little incentive to industry or to thrift among the working population; for why should a man labour to earn more than his fellows, only in order that he may be the more plundered?

The Korean farmer uses the rude wooden plough found all over the East. He may be seen on his way to the rice field, driving his buffalo before him, while he carries the plough on his back. Besides rice, the crops grown in Korea include millet, rye, and beans. Pumpkins are largely cultivated, also *Capsicum esculentum* for the sake of its seeds, which are much appreciated as a condiment. Cotton ranks among the more important crops of Korea, and almost every cottage garden contains a plot of *Canabis sinensis*, of the fibre of which grass-cloth is made.

The fourth class of Korea society comprises all traders and craftsmen, and includes, besides, the followers of the "vile callings," namely, those of the boatman, the butcher, the jailor, the letter-carrier, the monk, and the sorceress. The craftsmen of Korea, although their forbears carried to Japan the skill and knowledge which were the foundation of the exquisite productions of that country, are now chiefly remarkable for the uniform mediocrity of their work. One reason for this is, of course, the general poverty of the people, which prohibits their spending

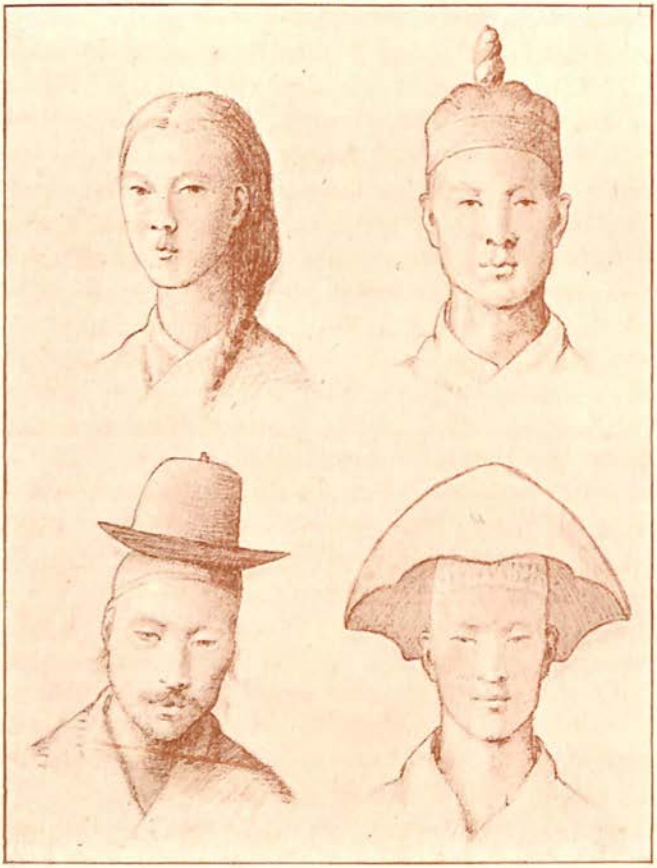
money except on the absolute necessities of life. Another is the fact that every household is, to a great extent, self-supplying. All Korean women can make clothes and shoes, and many of them can weave; while the men can manufacture the rude implements of the farm and the harness for the animals.

All these articles are therefore little in demand, and those who manufacture, or who trade in them, are obliged to sell at a very small profit. But even in the making of pottery, which is in the hands of the professional worker, there is displayed none of that feeling for design and appropriate ornament which gives such charm to the most ordinary specimens from China or Japan. The usual complaint of the "foreign" tourist in Korea is that there is nothing to buy.

CHAPTER XII.

CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES.

THE manners and customs of the Koreans would, I suppose, fill a volume if they could all be written down. There is hardly a circumstance or occasion of life which is not surrounded by the most rigid rules of etiquette. The two great events of marriage and death are well provided for in this respect. When a man wishes to find a wife for his son he looks around



UNMARRIED GIRL.

A KISSO OR MESSENGER.

MARRIED MAN WITH TOPKNOT.

A BEGGING PRIEST.

Face p. 59.

among the neighbouring families for a girl of suitable age. Only one restriction is placed upon his choice. Two persons bearing the same family name are not allowed to marry. And taking into consideration the paucity of clan-, or surnames, in Korea, which Dallet asserts do not exceed 150, it will be seen that this rule may not infrequently prove an obstacle when all other circumstances are favourable. The maiden selected, and her father's consent obtained, her horoscope and that of the bridegroom elect must be submitted to one of the blind astrologers in order that he may declare whether the union will be a fortunate one. This being satisfactory, the "pansu," or astrologer, is next invited to fix an auspicious day for the celebration of the marriage. On the wedding eve the bridegroom summons his friends to assist him in "donning the tuft," as the Korean phrase goes—that is, to take his hair out of its long plait, to raise it and twist it into the top-knot of the married man. In her home the bride receives a similar service at the hands of her maiden companions. Her plaited hair must now be secured in a loose knot, in which are thrust one or two silver pins. On the great day the bride, thickly veiled, goes in a closed chair to the house of the bridegroom. Her friends and relatives walk with her, and at the head of the procession is carried a goose—the emblem of conjugal fidelity. The marriage ceremony

consists in a series of bows, which show mutual consent. The bride bows four times to the bridegroom's father and twice to the bridegroom, who bows to her four times. A document is then signed by both parties. If, as not infrequently happens, the bride cannot write, she stretches out her left hand on the paper and herself traces the outline of it. Her veil is then removed, and her husband sees her, probably for the first time in his life. On her wedding-day, and for several days after, the bride must preserve absolute silence if she wishes to be considered really well bred and to create a favourable impression on everyone.

The forms and ceremonies to be observed at the time of death and afterwards are very numerous. When the native doctor has done his best or his worst in the way of administering decoctions of tiger's blood, deer's horn, or "ginsing"; when the "mutang" has had her turn and has likewise failed to effect a cure, then the dying man or woman is placed on the floor and the door is set wide open. At the moment of death it is well if someone of near kin to the dying person be at hand to call upon the spirits. If this is not done, the departing soul will not be received into the invisible community, but will wander through space an outcast spirit, and its attitude towards mankind will be a malignant one. In the case of a rich man the corpse must be placed in

A MOURNER.

Face p. 61.

a coffin of thick wood and kept for several months in a specially prepared chamber, and to this chamber his son, real or adopted, must come daily to mourn and lament. Clad in a frock of coarse grey cotton, his head bound with linen rags, he must prostrate himself before the coffin, groaning out, "Aiko, aiko." A "Guide for Mourners" is issued by the Government, which prescribes not only the proper times for weeping, but also the appropriate sounds to be made for parents and other relatives! The Koreans bury their dead, the favourite situation for graves being the slopes of low, grass-covered hills. The funeral procession is preceded and accompanied by a number of hired mourners bearing lanterns, and when, as is often the case, the funeral is held after nightfall, these are lit, and give a strange, unreal look to the train of white chairs which convey the pale-clad mourners. The only spot of colour is the coffin itself, which is painted in brilliant shades after the ancient fashion of Cathay. The son of the deceased walks immediately behind it, a white wand in his hand, his mourning robe all torn and soiled with dust, for this is the outward sign of his sorrow.

A rigid etiquette also attaches to the paying of visits. If the host and his guest are of equal rank it is proper for the former to sit facing the west, the latter facing east. Should one of them be of inferior rank, he must

place himself so as to look to the north. The great occasion for ceremonial visits is New Year's Day. At that season gifts are exchanged between friends, and, according to custom, all debts must be discharged. Besides New Year's Day the chief festivals and holidays among the Koreans are those which celebrate the various seasons of the year, the feast days of Buddhist saints, and the anniversary of the King's birthday. In spring free fights are held between the inhabitants of various villages, in which stones are the principal weapons. The number of people wounded in these *mêlées* is always large, and usually one or two are killed; but the Government never interferes with this national sport!

CHAPTER XIII.

BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

THE earliest religion of the Koreans was no doubt, like that of most primitive peoples, a form of animism. Buddhism was introduced into Korea, or Korai as it was then called, in the fourth century; monasteries and temples were established and endowed, and the gentle teachings of the Prince Gautama were universally accepted. That the priests and monks of the Buddhist faith long continued to exercise a powerful influence on

LIBRARY IN THE EAST PALACE.

Face p. 63.

the minds of the people is shown by the fact that it was one of their number who, in 912, incited the successful rebellion against China. Buddhism has now fallen into disrepute in Korea. Its temples and monasteries are still numerous, but the former are neglected, and the latter regarded with indifference. The monks and nuns beg throughout the land, and are seldom refused their dole in kind, but this is owing rather to the kindly temper of the givers than to any respect for the religious character of the recipients.

In 1368, on the accession of Ni Taijo, Buddhism was set aside, and Confucianism established as the State religion. To the mass of the people Confucianism teaches extreme reverence for parents and for old age in general. As in China, the twenty-four instances of filial piety form a favourite subject for the artist's pencil. The youthful Korean is thus constantly reminded of the devoted son, himself grey-headed, who, desiring that his aged parents should forget for a time the burden of their years, gambolled before them as he might have done in his infancy, perhaps half a century earlier. Or of that other, who, observing his father to be disturbed in his meditations by the flies, covered himself with honey and sat down beside the old man, thus attracting to himself the attentions of the buzzing horde!

The teaching of Confucius also imposes on all his

followers the solemn duty of the worship of ancestral tablets. In the dwellings of the rich a hall is set apart for the keeping of these precious memorials of the dead; in the poor man's house they may be seen ranged on a shelf in the living-room. One of the three souls, which the Chinese and Koreans believe each man to possess, is supposed to pass on his death into the tablet, which should therefore be prepared as soon as possible after the event. The Koreans say that the wood of which these tablets are made must be that of a tree which has grown "far away from the sound of the dog's bark or the cock's crow." During the three years of mourning salutations should be made, and food and incense offered daily to the spirits of the departed dwelling in these tablets. The doctrines of Confucius are, as a matter of course, studied by all educated Koreans, together with the ancient Chinese literature which forms the basis of their learning.

It is, however, the belief in "the spirits," that survival of his ancient religion, which most powerfully influences the mind of the average Korean. To him they are everywhere; they people the air, and are present in the mountains and rocks, the trees and the rivers. Also, he worships and fears the mighty host of the spirits of the dead; the souls of those who have died in loneliness and neglect become,

as he believes, malignant beings to be appeased and propitiated. Everywhere may be found shrines to "the spirits"; on the hill summits, or in the valleys, a heap of stones will be erected, often beneath the shadow of some ancient tree, and here the passer-by will turn aside to add another stone or to deposit a votive offering.

Between the spirits and the people stands, as interpreter and intercessor, the "mutang," or sorceress. In Korean estimation she is one whom the invisible beings themselves have chosen to serve them. On receiving the "call of the spirits," a woman will unhesitatingly leave her home and family to become a social outcast, for the sorceresses are not even permitted to live within the city walls. To all foreigners who reside for any length of time in Korea no sound becomes more familiar than that of the drum with which the "mutang" conducts her exorcisms. She is summoned, in cases of illness, to expel, by means of dances and incantations, the evil spirit which is supposed to be troubling the patient; and the performance is sometimes concluded by the catching and imprisoning of the devil in a bottle or jar!

I have witnessed several of these dances, and it appeared to me that the sorceress produced in herself a sort of ecstasy, which increased in force until at length she sank on the ground utterly exhausted. I could not but feel that the banging of drums and the clashing of

cymbals wielded by her attendants, together with the whirling motions and violent gestures of the "mutang" herself, must at times themselves give the *coup de grace* to the poor sufferer.

One of the most sacred spots in Korea is the Altar of the Spirits of the Land, situated in a grove of pine trees just outside the walls of Seoul. It is the scene of a yearly sacrifice by the Emperor in person; here in 1894 Li-Hsi formally renounced the suzerainty of China, and called upon the spirits of his ancestors to witness his intention of carrying out the reforms advised by the Japanese Government.

Many curious superstitions are to be found among the Koreans. For instance, at certain times of the year they manufacture small shoes or sandals of straw, which are then thrown away in the firm belief that with them go the sins of the thrower, whose guilt will fall upon anyone so imprudent as to pick up the shoes!

Charms are much worn, particularly those in the shape of insects, which themselves figure largely in Korean fable and superstition. I myself saw a beetle killed and suspended before a shrine, but neither at the time nor afterwards could I obtain any particular explanation of the incident. Among birds the falcon is sacred, and must on no account be killed. According to a legend, he offers a yearly sacrifice to "The Great Power."

In ancient times the tiger was worshipped and

ALTAR OF THE SPIRITS OF THE LAND.

Face p. 66.

endowed in popular estimation with supernatural powers. The favourite mythological animals are the kirin, dragon, phœnix, and the gigantic tortoise. The kirin, represented with the head of a one-horned ox, the body of a deer, and the tail of a lion, is the emblem of peace and joy.

Dragons are believed to be the guardians of the heavens and the earth. The phœnix, typical of love, is said to appear on the earth before the birth of a good ruler. A tortoise, as the symbol of Power, is supposed to support the world. The tortoise is also an emblem of Immortality, and the base of a memorial stone is often carved to represent one.

CHAPTER XIV.

A KOREAN PROCESSION.

THE Emperor very seldom leaves the Palace precincts. When he does so the train which then accompanies him forms a wonderful show of colours and of quaint costume. I was fortunate enough to be in Seoul when, on a special occasion, his Majesty went out to worship at the Tomb of the Queen. A certain number of us "foreigners" had received a royal invitation to have lunch in a pavilion near the tomb, and to witness the august arrival there.

The month was October, and the day a glorious one,

such as in England we call a real autumn day, but of which we seldom get more than three or four in the course of that season. In Korea, on the contrary, you can, as soon as the summer rains are over, count on three months of almost unbroken sunshine and clear, bracing air.

On this particular day the electric tramway conveyed us through the East Gate of the city, and to the spot, three miles beyond it, where the Queen's tomb is situated. The tomb itself is a hideous structure quite devoid of charm. It was erected over all that was left of the royal victim after her body had been burned by her murderers in the Palace garden; the pious researches of her attendants on the following day could only bring to light the bone of one finger!

Having arrived at the venerated spot, we were received by two of the Palace interpreters, and were shortly afterwards seated at a well-spread luncheon table in one of the pavilions built near the tomb for the convenience of worshippers. Lunch was a very cheery meal, but of the component parts of it I recollect nothing except that there was champagne and a cake with very hard pink iceing and several plates piled high with English sweets. When it was over we strolled out to see if there were any signs of his Majesty. He was to arrive from the opposite direction from that in which Seoul lay, having left his Palace early that morning to pay

MR. KIM KUI HAI, LATE INTERPRETER TO MR. McLEAVY BROWN.

It is perhaps fair to mention that Mr. Kim did not consider this sketch to be a pleasing representation of his person. On its being shown to him he murmured ruefully: "And am I all the same like that?"

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his respects at the tomb of an ancestor some ten miles distant. We climbed one of the small hills which abound in the neighbourhood of Seoul, their rocky granite sides ribbed and scored by the action of the elements. Here and there in clefts of the rock a stunted pine throws out its distorted branches, and the large stones upon the hill slopes are covered with Virginia creeper, whose brilliant tints in autumn lend a vivid touch of colour to an otherwise sombre landscape.

We stood on the crest of the hill and saw below us the royal cavalcade winding through the valley; conspicuous in the brilliant sunshine was the golden palanquin of the Emperor and the yellow umbrella which is always carried before him. As the procession drew near we saw that it was headed by a crowd of Palace servants in red and yellow, some of whom bore curiously embroidered banners. Next were the "yangbans," or nobles, on horseback; as they approached, each one dismounted stiffly, and, supported on either side by a servant, waddled solemnly towards the great Gate of the Tomb in all the affected helplessness of a Korean grandee. Each was attired in a voluminous robe of madder brown, with crimson sleeves, a blue sash knotted at the side, and a blue felt hat ornamented with a bunch of peacock's feathers. Each carried, as a sign of his official rank, a short polished bâton, decorated with blue ribbons. And

then, amid a company of his soldiers marching in lines came the Emperor in his gorgeous palanquin, the bearers all in Imperial yellow. His Majesty wore a blue robe, embroidered with dragons, the symbol of regal power, and on his head was the black Court headdress with wings.*

He returned our salutations with bows and smiles, for he is really pleased to see foreigners when they do not come to demand or to extort anything from him. Following that of his father came the chair of the Crown Prince; the Heir-Apparent to the throne of Korea is a pathetic example of the uselessness of wealth and position where the one great blessing of bodily health is wanting. To him succeeded a crowd of courtiers and hangers-on in all the colours of the rainbow.

The chief personages of the procession vanished into a building, whence they reappeared in white mourning costume, and passed into the Gate of the Tomb.

It was now 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and was becoming very chilly. We began to think with longing of the cheery fires which awaited us at home, but the guests of an Emperor, although in some respects so fortunate, must not depart without leave, and we were fearful that, as had happened on a former occasion, the Emperor might invite us to form part of the returning procession. Our

* These wings, or side-pieces, are supposed to represent the all-hearing ear of a Sovereign and his satellites.

SERVANTS OF THE EMPEROR.

Face p. 70.

fears, however, were relieved by a message from the Emperor excusing our further attendance, an instance of Imperial clemency which won and received our heart-felt gratitude.

CHAPTER XV.

GINSING GROWING AT SONG-DO.

"GINSING" (*Panax ginsing*), that precious drug esteemed among the Chinese as the true elixir of life, is largely grown in Korea. Before the introduction into China of American "ginsing" during the eighteenth century the roots used to fetch their weight in gold. Now a "cattee" (about 1½ lbs.) is sold for $60, or even more.

The district of Song-do, about fifty-five miles from Seoul, is the centre of the ginsing industry. Its export being an Imperial monopoly, it is all bought from the growers by officers of the State and taken to the Emperor's factories to be prepared for sale.

We visited Song-do during the time of "harvest," when all day long, and from every direction, a continual stream of root-laden ponies and coolies converged towards the factory. For miles around the fields present a curious appearance; the ginsing planted in rows being protected from the sun's heat by straw shelters, the tiny sloping

roofs of which suggest that one is looking down upon the streets of a pigmy town.

The roots are subjected to several processes before they are fit for exportation. They are first washed and scrubbed with hard brushes, while all the rootlets or "beards" are pulled off, to be sold as "inferior quality." Then they are steamed for hours over a slow fire, and lastly, exposed in flat baskets to the rays of the sun. Ginsing is usually taken in the form of an infusion. It is also preserved in honey, and eaten as a sweetmeat. In this form I have been privileged to taste it, but, perhaps from being in too sound a state of health at the time, I did not experience any of the marvellous exhilaration it is said to produce!

Song-do was, in ancient times, a walled city of some importance. It was the site of a Royal Palace, the remains of which are still to be seen. The surroundings of Song-do are very charming, the rich valleys in which the ginsing flourishes being divided by grass-covered hills, on the lower slopes of which are magnificent groves of chestnut trees. The only European house in Song-do, in which we were fortunate enough to be the guests of a kindly American lady, is situated on the highest ground within the city walls. On the third morning of our sojourn we awoke to find an addition to our house-party, in the shape of a fugitive from Imperial wrath. This was a certain Mr.

PACKING GINSING.

Face p. 72.

Yi, a gentleman of Song-do. News had come to him from Seoul that an enemy had accused him before the Emperor, and that the myrmidons of the law were even then on their way to drag him to prison. Only in the house of a "foreigner" could he hope to find security. One felt quite mediæval with a refugee living in the back parlour, and especially when, after nightfall, he would creep forth from his retreat and join us in the front room, where we usually sat; there he would stand by the window (holding up a corner of the blind in his shaking hand), and peering out into the darkness. On the fourth day after his arrival a friend brought word that the storm raised against him had blown over, and it was a happy and smiling Mr. Yi who took his leave of us to return to the bosom of his family. I quite missed him. To feel that one is, in however small a degree, a protecting genius to a fellow creature is a most pleasurable sensation, and I had taken a special interest in our fugitive from the conviction that I had, certainly on one occasion, baffled the efforts of a wily pursuer anxious to discover his place of hiding. During one of our visits to the factory some important-looking Koreans suddenly arrived upon the scene. One portly gentleman in sky-blue, before whom was borne a huge seal of office, was pointed out to us as the Governor of the City. He was accompanied by his son, a pallid youth, speaking some English. On our leaving the factory he offered himself

as our escort to our temporary abode, and it required some very decided snubs on my part to induce him to take his leave of us at the garden gate. I was so fully persuaded that his intention had been to "spy out the land," and that I had successfully nonplussed him, that it was really something of a blow to learn several days later on that he was a great friend of Mr. Yi's, and entirely in sympathy with him. On coming up to Song-do—we had performed the greater part of the journey from Seoul by water—we resolved, for the sake of variety, to return by road. If we wished to reach Seoul in one day we found it would be necessary to make a very early start indeed. Accordingly we rose at 4 a.m., drowsily settled ourselves in our chairs, and were carried through the sleeping town of Song-do, and out into the dark and silent country beyond. On either side of our path lay fields of the precious "ginsing," and in each field, on his tiny raised platform, stood the dark figure of the watchman. Every now and then one of these would utter a doleful howl, which was answered by all the other wardens of the night within hail. This they did probably as much to cheer their own quaking hearts as to scare away possible thieves! for, as has been mentioned, the Koreans are not remarkable for courage. On we went, passing now and then through villages, and by farm-steadings. Gradually some signs of life began to appear. Towzled heads would protrude from windows and doors, and as

the first streak of dawn separated the soft grey clouds in the eastern sky we met other travellers, most of them pedestrians, carrying long staves in their hands.

All this time we had been borne swiftly along, our bearers maintaining the long steady trot peculiar to the chair-men, and which takes them over the ground at the rate of about five miles an hour. With the idea of relieving them of our weight, we several times got out of our chairs and walked for a short distance, but the bearers always begged us to get in again, as our slow pace only delayed them! This, as we consider ourselves to be quick walkers, quite hurt our feelings. We had each of us two sets of four bearers, who relieved each other from time to time, and we found it was necessary to let them stop at each wayside shop we came to, where in exchange for "cash" they obtained supplies of walnuts and dried persimmons, the latter a great stand-by for travellers. At ten o'clock we stopped for breakfast, which we had taken with us. We ate it in the verandah of an empty house, while a crowd of Koreans gazed at us with languid curiosity.

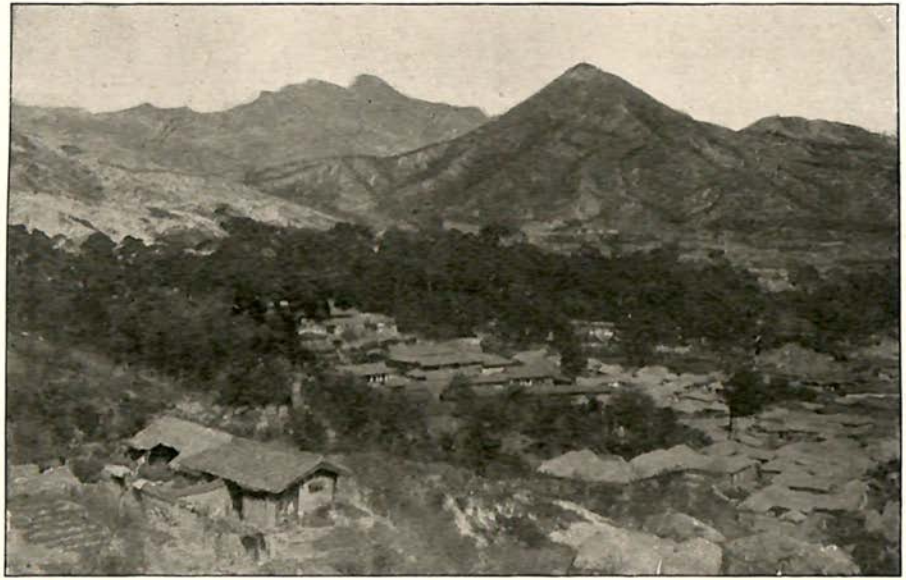
I remember little of the country we passed through during the middle of the day, for I slept uneasily in my chair, awaking at intervals to find my head and shoulders hanging out of it in a way that was far from comfortable. It was not yet five o'clock when we entered Seoul,

and our bearers were not so tired, even after their 57 miles, as to omit the run with which it is correct for gentlemen of their profession to land you at your destination. This way of theirs was always a great trial to me on arriving at a strange house, especially when my hostess and perhaps my host were standing at the door to greet me, for one really cannot feel one is cutting a graceful or a dignified figure when one is being joggled up and down at the mercy of four lusty runners!

CHAPTER XVI.

AN EXPEDITION TO PING-YANG.

HAVING received an invitation to visit the American community of Ping-Yang, we determined to go thither. Accordingly we embarked one evening on board a small steamer of the Chosén Kaisha Line, which sailed at dawn. A voyage of two days brought us to the newly opened port of Chinampo, where our ship was to be detained for twenty-four hours. We went ashore and were hospitably received by the Commissioner of Customs, the only European inhabitant, who also fulfilled the duties of English, American, and Russian Consuls. In the course of a stroll round the settlement, he pointed out to us the proposed



VIEW OF SEOUL.

Face p. 76.

sites for the various foreign consulates, from which sites the sea had, and I believe still has to be, driven back! At low tide, the retreating water leaves bare acres of shining brown mud, the happy hunting ground of myriads of crabs, large and small. There is an embryo Japanese settlement at Chinampo, and two Japanese inns, but at the time of our visit the place presented a rather cheerless aspect. At dawn on the day following, our steamer started again for Ping-Yang, and we almost immediately entered the Tatong river. Among our fellow passengers were several American engineers on their way to the gold mines in the north. Also a French Father, a picturesque figure in his black "soutane" and white sun-helmet. He told me that when he first came to Korea, thirteen years before, he and his fellow missionaries had, on account of the attitude of the officials towards "foreigners," often found it convenient to assume the dress of Korean mourners. On the morning of the second day we arrived at Ping-Yang, where we received a hearty welcome. The sights of Ping-Yang comprise the tomb of Ki Tsze, and a Confucian temple, said to have been built by him. Then there is the battle-field, which we visited in company with Mr. Moffat, an ardent missionary, who remained in Ping-Yang during nearly the whole of the war. We climbed the little grave-studded hill, on the summit of which the Chinese entrenched themselves; and where they were

surprised and overcome by the Japanese, who had crept up under cover of the thick brushwood. It was in a sortie from this fort that the brave General Tcho of the Chinese army fell. The plain below the hill was the scene of a terrible fight, or rather carnage. The unfortunate Chinamen, their only worthy general slain, and they themselves almost untrained, and but poorly armed, were cut down in hundreds by the well-drilled and finely equipped Japanese. Mr. Moffat told me that ten days after the fight the ground was still strewn with the open umbrellas and fans, with which the Chinese had gone into battle. An account which I received from one who witnessed their departure from Taku gives some idea of their unpreparedness for the stern realities of war. "Poor fellows," said my informant. "I felt so sorry for them. Many seemed to be mere coolies and farm labourers, who had been impressed to swell the numbers of the regiments. Some were actually armed with wooden guns, and many carried bird-cages in their hands!" Not far from the battle-field is the evidence of a curious superstition. This is an upright wooden post, to which the city of Ping-Yang, built in the form of a boat, is supposed to be attached. What awful catastrophe would follow the removal of this post may be left to the reader's imagination!

The people of Ping-Yang are a tall race, and remarkable for their good looks. The women wear domed straw hats

at least four yards in circumference, so that collisions between pedestrians cannot, one would imagine, be infrequent.

A part of the old city wall, dating from the time when Ping-Yang was the capital of Korai, is still standing. The present city possesses no noteworthy features.

When we desired to return southwards once more it was found that this time, in order to reach Chinampo, we should have to make the voyage thither in a "junk." Our friends kindly made all arrangements for us, and about 4 p.m. one afternoon we embarked, taking with us provisions for two days, although our crew of four Koreans gave us good hope of reaching Chinampo on the following evening. We were also provided with the price of our journey in the shape of several yards of "cash" strung on coarse twine. The sleeping apartment assigned to us was the more for'ard of the two cabins. These were really small holds, perhaps 6 ft. by 6 ft., and about 4 ft. deep. Into them one dropped or slid from above. They contained no furniture of any sort, but their corners were full of a rather too mysterious darkness! When evening fell and the boat was made fast for the night, M. and I dropped into our cabin, and spreading our rugs on the rough boards, we lay down side by side—but not to sleep—for from the gloomy recesses of our cavernous retreat came forth, as it appeared to us, an army of tiny tormentors. It was Gulliver among

the Liliputians—only more so! We sought refuge upon deck; but the unpleasant proximity of the Koreans, who were sprawling all over it, drove us down again. With the first light of dawn we rose from an unrefreshing and broken slumber. All day we tacked down the river, passing through a fertile and pleasant country. But words fail me to describe our horror, almost our despair, on finding ourselves at sunset still far from Chinampo, and another night with the pigmies before us! This was decidedly one of those moments in which I echoed from my heart the words of the Scottish exile of old, "Oh, why left I my hame?"

We will pass over in silence the horrors of that second night. Not the Cecil or the Carlton Hotel could have seemed more truly luxurious to us than did the little Japanese inn at Chinampo when we walked up to it on the following morning and found there cleanliness and hot water in abundance.

This uncomfortable experience is almost the only detail of my sojourn in Korea which I would not wish to repeat. No other land that I have visited did I leave with such regret or such fervent hopes that a kindly fate might one day lead my steps again thither. If I have enabled my readers to feel in any degree the wonderful charm of this unique country, my little book will not have been written in vain.

PRINTED BY CASSELL AND COMPANY, LIMITED, LA BELLE SAUVAGE, LONDON, E.C.

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on 28 December, 2018